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GUIDE FOR

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ASSESSING

RECREATION

POSSIBILITIES

ON PRIVATE

LAND

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FEDERAL EXTENSION SERVICE
U.S. DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE

GUIDE FOR ASSESSING RECREATION POSSIBILITIES ON PRIVATE LAND

This leaflet is to help landowners decide if the recreation business may be for them.

The key factors are listed. Discuss them with your family. Also discuss them with your extension agents, soil conservationist and other professional advisers as well as with your friends. Be sure to discuss the subject with one or more people who are already in the business.

In the end you will be more satisfied with your decision.

Research shows that the success of farm recreation enterprises largely depends upon considering certain factors carefully in the beginning.

- The human element—you and your family.
- The community's features—its attractiveness and spirit.
- The proposed site or land area—its suitability for the recreation enterprise and its location.
- The competitive and complementary aspects—probable demand, capacity of existing facilities, and opportunity to develop facilities or services that complement existing ones.
- The laws and regulations on such business.

If, after using this guidesheet, you feel it would be feasible for you to consider one or more recreation enterprises, investigate the matter more thoroughly.

Confer with people who know to get more information. Make careful estimates of probable costs and unfavorable factors. Consider your family and your situation.

But, if your case doesn't rate very high on this sheet, then forget about developing a farm recreation project and turn to something else for the added income you want.

Recreation is one of the fastest growing industries in the United States today. Farms, ranches and rural communities offer recreational opportunities that many urban people crave—outdoors, animals, nature, country life, community atmosphere.

Thus, recreation is a salable farm product. Thousands of rural people are making a good income from operating or working in recreation enterprises. Some are cooperating with neighbors to dovetail businesses, obtain services, and share costs.



BASIC REQUIREMENTS OF MAIN FARM RECREATION ENTERPRISES

(Special facilities and conditions will also be needed)

SITUATION		SHOOTING PRESERVE	FARM VACATION OR GUEST HOME	FISHING AND/OR WILD WATERFOWL HUNTING	PICNIC, PLAYGROUND AND SPORTS AREA	CAMPING SITE
<p>Consider these main factors to determine whether it's worth while to investigate any of these enterprises further.</p> <p>Check your case using the following list. It will help you decide whether to go ahead or forget the idea.</p> <p>Add or substitute items to adapt this guide to a particular region, place, or family.</p>		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● 250-300 acres minimum, half good crop land ● Within easy driving time of metropolitan area ● Reasonably accessible ● Moderate climate ● Interest in rearing game birds, training and guiding with dogs. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Family likes people and mixes well ● Sizable house with plumbing ● Good eats ● Preferably 50 acres or more ● Moderate climate ● Accessible ● Safe yards and fields ● Working farm ● Variety of recreation things to do in area. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Suitable pond or lake ● Accessible ● Supply of game fish ● Favorable waterfowl habitat in season. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Wooded area for shade ● Large pond or lake ● Within easy driving time of urban centers ● Easy access roads and parking area ● Some land suitable for playgrounds and courts ● Easy to supply adequate water, sanitation, lights. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Relatively isolated wooded area ● Preferably also pond or lake ● Reasonably accessible ● Good, clean water supply ● Nature study opportunities.
1. Do we believe in recreation? Would we enjoy this type of business?						
2. Are we interested and talented in meeting and serving all kinds of people?						
3. How about my age and health, my family's? Are we suited for this work?						
4. Is family labor available? Most recreation use occurs on weekends. Will this interfere with our church or social life?						
5. Do we know enough about this business? Do we want to learn? What and how much technical help will we need? Is it available?						
6. Camping and picnicking means garbage collection and cleanup of sanitary facilities, etc. Will we mind doing this type of work?						
7. Will we be able to plan and finance facilities, equipment, land changes?						
8. Is our place attractive and well kept, or can it easily be made so?						
9. What is the community's attitude toward outsiders? Is the community attractive?						
10. Do we have the climate for this type of recreation business?						
11. Are our acreage and land conditions suitable for this type of business?						
12. Are there now public or private recreation areas nearby of this type? Would they be competitive or complementary to ours?						
13. Is the demand for this activity here adequate to justify an increase of facilities on our property?						
14. Are there better ways for us to increase income?						
15. Other factors?						

Recreation enterprises also provide enjoyment to the farm families themselves. They enjoy making new friends; they enjoy serving people; they enjoy teaching urban visitors, especially children, about plants, animals, insects, machinery, and farm life in general.

But it's a business, too. Recreation enterprises must be soundly developed and well run if they are to succeed. They entail financial investments, liability insurance, operating expenses, hard work, and sometimes inconvenience.

They also hold possibilities for satisfactory returns. Those who begin on a small scale and grow into a larger operation based on experience probably stand a better chance of success than those who try to develop swiftly on a large scale.

For more detailed information, check through *Rural Recreation Enterprises for Profit*, AIB-277. For a free copy, send a postcard to the Office of Information, U.S. Department of Agriculture, Washington, D.C., 20250.

Several other helpful bulletins are also available. These include financial figures and suggestions from actual recreation businesses. Before going too far, get further technical information from your local and State Extension Services, Soil Conservation Service, Farmers Home Administration, Forest Service, Agricultural Stabilization and Conservation Service, or State highway, park, game, and conservation departments.